



January—February 2006

State requests federal disaster declaration

Gov. Chris Gregoire requested President Bush March 6 to declare a federal disaster for winter storm damage between Jan. 27 and Feb. 4 to public facilities such as county roads, public water systems and public utility systems in 11 counties.

The governor asked the disaster declaration to include Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Snohomish and Wahkiakum counties. Gov. Gregoire signed a state proclamation of emergency March 3 in preparation to make the federal disaster declaration request.

"Extensive damage has been done to the water and electric supply systems in these counties, as well as to their transportation infrastructure," said Gov. Gregoire. "I have directed state agencies to do everything possible to assist these areas as they continue to build their emergency readiness capabilities and prepare for oncoming storms."

"These damages included flooding from high tides and overflowing streams; road washouts; slope failures; severe erosion to seawalls and other public facilities; widespread



A state Department of Transportation (WSDOT) worker checks slide damage to U.S. 101 south of Aberdeen. Gov. Chris Gregoire requested federal aid Feb. 2 for statewide road damages caused by winter flooding and slides. DOT estimated winter storms caused more than \$6 million in damage to the state's federal road system. (WSDOT Photo)

Governor approves state request for 2006 homeland security grants

Washington State's 2006 homeland security grant application seeks \$54 million for statewide homeland security (HLS) initiatives and \$61 million for the Seattle Urban Area, which includes Seattle, Bellevue, King, Snohomish and Pierce counties.

In 2005, the state received \$29 million in federal grant program funds and \$11 million for the Seattle Urban Area under the Urban Area Security Initiative program.

The 2006 application was approved by Gov. Chris Gregoire March 2 and forwarded by Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Lowenberg, director, Washington Military Department, to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The grant application will be considered for the first time on a competitive basis with other states and urban areas.

A federal panel and multi-state disciplinary peer group will review the applications, and DHS will prioritize awards on the basis of risk and need. DHS expects to announce awards on May 31.

Eighty per cent of the state homeland security grant funds will be

State submits 2006 homeland security grant request

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passed through to local jurisdictions. The grant performance period will be 24 months.

Guidelines for the 2006 HLS grants came out in December 2005. DHS said the FY 2006 funding would focus on enhancing capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to, or recover from chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE), agricultural and cyber-terrorism incidents.

The Katrina disaster allows applications for funding on catastrophic events as long as they also build capabilities related to terrorism.

Grant application also must focus on statewide initiatives that tie into priorities listed in the National Preparedness Plan.

Statewide initiatives were developed through a three-day conference held in Tacoma in December. The 250 conference participants included emergency responders from fire, health, law enforcement, public works and emergency medical services; and emergency managers from local, state, tribal and federal entities.

Highlights of the statewide 2006 HLS grant application were:

- **Enhancement of responder teams to operate in a CBRNE environment, \$6.1 million.** This request seeks specialized equipment and training for emergency responders to respond to CBRNE events.
- **Critical infrastructure identification, \$6 million.** Improving identification and protection of public and private critical infrastructure.
- **Build regional interoperable communications capabilities, \$14 million.** Purchasing interoperable communications equipment for local responders.
- **Medical response capability enhancements, \$4 million.** Addressing gaps in medical resources, including hospital surge and ventilation capacity, volunteer capacity, and caches of personal protective equipment.

Highlights of the Seattle Urban Area 2006 grant application were as follows:

- **Enhancing CBRNE detection capabilities, \$5.6 million.** DHS has identified CBRNE detection as one of Seattle's largest deficiencies in capabilities. Funds detection equipment.
- **Public Education and Outreach, \$1.4 million:** Requesting funds for preparedness media outreach and outreach to vulnerable populations (e.g. the elderly, people with limited English proficient, and the economically-disadvantaged).
- **Interoperable Communications, \$5.3 million:** Requesting funds for equipment to improve radio, data and video communications within the Seattle Urban Area.
- **Enhancement of Law Enforcement CBRNE related capabilities, \$12 million:** Requesting training and equipment for law enforcement personnel on CBRNE response, and for establishing a Rapid Deployment Force within the Urban Area. Less than 40 percent of Seattle Urban Area is currently trained in CBRNE response.



A blustery winter storm Feb. 4 caused several boats in the Westport Marina to break loose. This one, the Golden Sable, ran aground on the sand by the breakwater at the marina entrance. Several other vessels broke loose at the marina. (Photo by Kevin Hong, Aberdeen Daily World).

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power outages due to trees toppled by high winds; extensive debris on public roads from fallen trees; mud and sand; and damaged port facilities, such as marinas and ferry slips.”

“Damages in eastern Washington were most extensive on the public utility infrastructure and emergency communications systems in Pend Oreille County due to the combination of heavy snow, ice and high wind.”

Gov. Gregoire proclaimed a statewide State of Emergency on Feb. 2 to seek federal aid to repair extensive road damage caused by winter flooding and slides.

Initial damage reports from local jurisdictions indicated that there was insufficient uninsured storm damage to individual homes, residences and small businesses to warrant a federal disaster request for assistance to individuals and households or a request for physical disaster loans for homeowners, renters, and non-farm businesses from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

SAR Conference set for May 19-21 in Enumclaw

As many as 1,500 persons are expected at the 2006 Washington State Search and Rescue (SAR) Conference May 19-21 at the King County Fairgrounds in Enumclaw.

The conference, which is being hosted by the King County Sheriff's office and King County Search and Rescue Association, will include pre-conference courses which require registration. Conference courses are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and will include instructional tracks in SAR management, skills, technology, emergency worker required-classes, and how to use of dogs in search and rescue. Registration with meals is \$75 per person until March 31, rising on April 1 to \$95 until an April 30 cutoff. Registration without meals is \$55 until March 31; \$75 from April 1 to April 30; and \$95 after April 30. Information and registration forms are at the conference website at registration@wasar2006.org.

The 2006 Legislature tackled many EMD issues

EM Funding

Washington legislators took the unprecedented step of appropriating \$2 million in the 2006 supplemental budget to enhance state and local emergency management operations. It marked the first time the Legislature had allocated money exclusively for local and state emergency management programs.

The one-year appropriation, which started as a measure introduced by Sen. Jim Kastema, D-Puyallup, will assign \$1.6 million for competitive grants to regional agencies, local governments, tribal governments, regional incident management teams and private organizations.

The funding will be authorized when the supplemental budget is signed into law by Gov. Chris Gregoire.

Washington Emergency Management Division (WEMD) will administer the grants which can fund development and coordination of emergency plans; training of elected and appointed officials on disaster response; administration of joint emergency management training exercises; and implementation of projects to strengthen emergency response, mitigation, preparation and coordination.

The appropriation allocated \$400,000 to WEMD to:

- administer the competitive grants and to implement development and coordination of emergency management plans, training of

elected and appointed officials on disaster response; and administering joint periodic emergency management training exercises.

- study the feasibility of having regional disaster medical assistance teams and urban search and rescue teams available within the state to be deployed by the governor. Study findings and recommendations are to be submitted to the Legislature by Dec. 1, 2006.

AHAB Funding

Washington's 2006 special session approved a significant expansion of the state's All-Hazard Alert Broadcasting (AHAB) network along Washington's Pacific coastline.

The 2006 supplemental budget, which now awaits the signature of Gov. Chris Gregoire, would allocate \$950,000 to install at least 20 AHAB loudspeaker systems. These 20 systems would be in addition to the 10 systems funded in the Fiscal Year 06 federal budget for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Reflecting pre-session discussions on improvements in both all-hazard and tsunami and alert warning for coastal residents, the governor asked legislators to appropriate \$450,000 to install upwards of 10 AHAB systems.

After the Senate budget had endorsed the governor's plan,

House budget writers doubled the governor's AHAB budget request, calling for the installation of as many as 20 loudspeaker systems. A Senate-House Conference Committee approved the House action.

George Crawford, WEMD's earthquake program manager, said a private contractor already is selecting sites for the AHAB systems. He said he hopes installation work can be completed by the end of 2006.

He said the loudspeaker systems will be located in all four of the coastal counties – Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor and Pacific – and will be concentrated towards the most populated beach and coastline areas.

The AHAB systems, which are produced by Federal Signal, currently can be activated by local officials as well as by the National Oceanic and Atmos-

Geologic mapping

Washington legislators approved money in the 2006 supplemental budget to fund positions in the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to conduct geologic hazard mapping.

The Legislature's supplemental state budget, which needs the final approval of Gov. Chris Gregoire, allocated \$654,000 to DNR to use 3.5 full-time employees to "conduct and maintain an assessment of the volcanic, seismic, landslide

Many EMD issues addressed in the 2006 Legislature

Geologic mapping

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and tsunami hazards in Washington.”

The DNR budget proviso, which was supported by WEMD, also would underwrite work to “research and map earthquake and landslide hazards throughout Washington State.”

George Crawford, WEMD’s earthquake program manager, said the DNR geologic assessments are needed now as the state seeks to upgrade its tsunami response system and inundation mapping models for the Washington coast and Puget Sound.

He added that the DNR geologic information also was a critical element in helping the state to assess the Mount St. Helens eruption patterns in order to provide timely alert and warning information.

ROIP Legislation

A bill now awaiting Gov. Chris Gregoire’s signature will take a dramatic step to improve the communications interoperability for all Washington emergency response agencies, says Don Miller, supervisor of WEMD’s telecommunications section.

Substitute House Bill 2715, which was passed by overwhelming majorities in both houses, approved the starting the Technical Implementation Plan adopted by the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) last December.

Testimony for the bill said that the SIEC plan would establish uniform standards to help response agencies talk to one another across jurisdictional boundaries.

The SEIC plan calls for the implementation of the radio over internet protocol (ROIP) and APCO P-25 standards that will allow existing and future state agency radio networks to communicate with each other through the selection of base stations and/or repeaters interconnected via Ethernet connections, Miller said.

He said the ROIP is a sound technology and does not require our existing radio systems to be replaced. “ROIP is being established within Clallam, Jefferson, and Benton counties under various federal grants. The state Emergency Operations Center will be linked to all of these counties via ROIP solutions this summer.”

Miller said these counties plan to utilize the VHF interoperability channels (VTAC) and UHF interoperability channels (UTAC) and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) interoperability channels to provide communications paths to all federal, state and local responders as needed through the ROIP solution.

He said WEMD also would like to know of any county or regional communications plans for the use of the VHF and UHF

interoperability channels, and NTIA interoperability channels in order to coordinate their plans with the SIEC Technical Working Group and other counties.

Miller encourages counties to plan for the use of these new VHF and UHF channels for interoperability.

WEMD currently holds the Federal Communications Commission licenses for mobile radio operations on all VTAC and UTAC channels. WEMD is finalizing an agreement with NTIA for the use of NTIA VHF and UHF interoperability channels and is the point of contact for authorization to use those frequencies in Washington.

PNW Seismic Network

Funding for an important upgrade in the University of Washington’s Pacific Northwest Seismic Network was approved by Washington legislators in the 2006 special session.

Gov. Chris Gregoire requested \$400,000 in the 2006 supplemental budget to add two employees to operate the network in the UW’s Seismology Laboratory.

The Senate cut the appropriation to \$180,000. House members restored the governor’s request, and the House-Senate conference committee affirmed the House’s position. The supplemental budget received final legislative passage March 8, now awaits final approval by the governor.

Pandemic flu summit slated

A state summit on preparations for pandemic flu is set for April 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Tacoma Convention and Trade Center.

The summit is part of a national campaign by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to encourage citizens to prepare for a possible pandemic flu outbreak and to give participants a chance to discuss ideas and concerns about pandemic flu planning and preparations.

Presenters will include Gov. Chris Gregoire; HHS Secretary Michael Leavitt; Dr. Richard A. Raymond, U.S. Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Food Safety; Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Secretary Mary Selecky; and Maj. Gen. Timothy Lowenberg, director, Washington Military Department.

Attendance is by invitation only. For additional information contact Gail Zimmerman, state DOH summit coordinator, at gail.zimmerman@doh.wa.gov or at 360-236-4087.

State DOH's website at www.doh.wa.gov has additional information on pandemic flu and links to other useful websites. DOH also will publish a brochure entitled "Preparing for Pandemic Influenza: A Personal and Family Guide," and a State Pandemic Influenza Planning Overview" on pandemic flu planning.



State Department of Transportation crews work to remove slide debris from State Highway 20 in Skagit County. Many parts of western Washington experienced 25 days or more of consecutive rainfall between mid-December and mid-January. (WSDOT photo)

Pandemic flu preparedness steps

A flood news stories on Pandemic influenza and avian influenza (bird flu) has raised a number of basic questions such as—"How likely is it that an influenza pandemic will occur?" How serious would a pandemic be?" and "What can we do to prepare?"

The first thing to know is that an influenza pandemic is an outbreak that spreads rapidly from continent to continent. It is caused by a new flu virus to which humans have not developed immunity. Avian influenza or bird flu, is a type of flu that has killed millions of birds throughout the world. It has also killed some humans who had close contact with infected birds. It cannot be passed from one person to another, but scientists and public health officials

believe that could change.

There are things you can do as an individual to prepare. For a flu epidemic

As for any emergency, you should be prepared to get along at home without assistance for 5-10 days. Make sure to keep on hand the water, food, prescription medicines and other items you will need.

During a pandemic the best way to slow the spread of disease is to do a few simple things—cover your cough, wash your hands and stay away from others who might be ill.

Both employers and employees will need to recognize that it is crucial for sick workers to stay home, recuperate and avoid spreading illness to their coworkers.

EMD staff appointments, changes

Mark Ligman, WEMD's hazardous materials program manager, left Feb. 2 to work for The Boeing Co. He came to WEMD from Boeing in 1999 to work with State Emergency Response Committee.

Michelle Sabin, who was WEMD's Emergency Management Performance Grants manager, left Feb. 10 to work for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. She came to WEMD in 2001 as the Tsunami/Hazmat/SERC Program Assistant from the state Department of Corrections.

Ron Wilson returned to WEMD Jan. 30 in a temporary appointment as State Emergency Response Commission manager. He had worked in EMD from 2000 to 2005 before transferring to the state Department of Transportation.

Adrian Damon joined EMD on Feb. 21 as the Homeland Security Training and Exercise Coordinator in the Exercise and Training Section of the Planning, Exercise and Training Unit. He is a U.S. Air Force veteran with experience in disaster preparedness; chemical, biological, radiation, nuclear, and high-yield explosive hazards; and anti-terrorism programs.

James Yates was named March 1 as the State Training Program Manager in the Exercise and Training Section of the Planning, Exercise and Training Unit. A U.S. Army veteran, Yates previously served as program manager for Homeland Security Region 3, which includes Thurston, Lewis, Pacific, Grays Harbor and Mason counties.

Robin Dildine-Gwin came to WEMD on March 1 as Secretary Senior in the Exercise and Training Section of the Planning, Exercise and Training Unit. She previously worked in the state Department of Social and Health Services.

Rachel Glahe received a temporary appointment Feb. 1 as WEMD's Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) Manager in the Homeland Security Section of the Programs Unit. She previously worked in the private sector.

Mary Soderquist was named to a homeland security grants coordinator position March 1 in the Homeland Security Section of the Programs Unit. She came to WEMD from the state Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Alec Chapman, who came to EMD in 2004 as a Secretary Senior in the Homeland Security Section in the Programs Unit, left Jan. 30 to accept a program manager position with the King County Office of Emergency Management.

PNW Network funding okayed

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Jim Mullen, WEMD director, told the House Appropriations Committee that the network upgrades would provide better real time information emergency managers about the areas of severest earthquake shaking.

Such information can better direct emergency response agencies to areas of greatest need following an earthquake, Mullen said.

The network improvement also could provide earthquake early warning to critical facilities before the strong shaking arrives.



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The Washington Emergency Management Division, including the State Emergency Operations Center, is located in Building 20 on Camp Murray, located at exit 122 on Interstate 5 south of Tacoma, Washington.